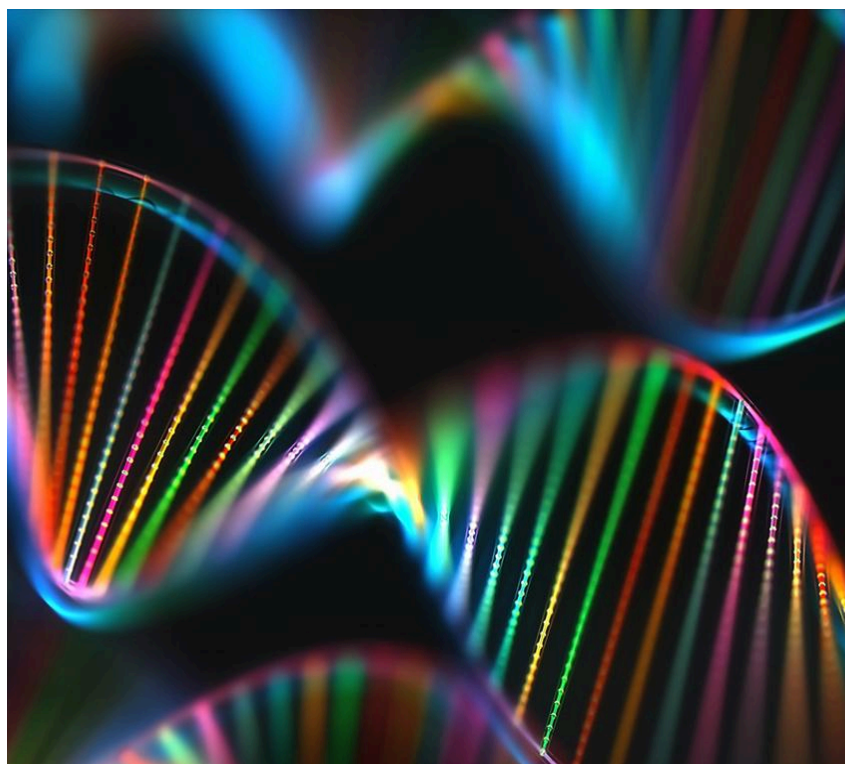


What Is a Church's DNA?

"Reflections" Where are we going?



We all learned in school that DNA is the material that carries the necessary hereditary information needed to replicate most living things. Every organism has a unique DNA combination or signature, and it's most often found as a double-stranded helix molecule, a 'twisted ladder' like in the picture below. Every DNA molecule is distinguished by its sequence of nucleotides, which are the building blocks of material that are transferred from one generation to another. Our DNA acts as a blueprint or instruction manual and determines our individual traits, including eye colour, hair colour, height and can even influence our predisposition to certain characteristics or health conditions. While 99.9% of our DNA is the same from one person to another, the remaining 0.1% allows for millions of variations. With the exception of identical twins, every person's DNA sequence is different, making each of us unique.



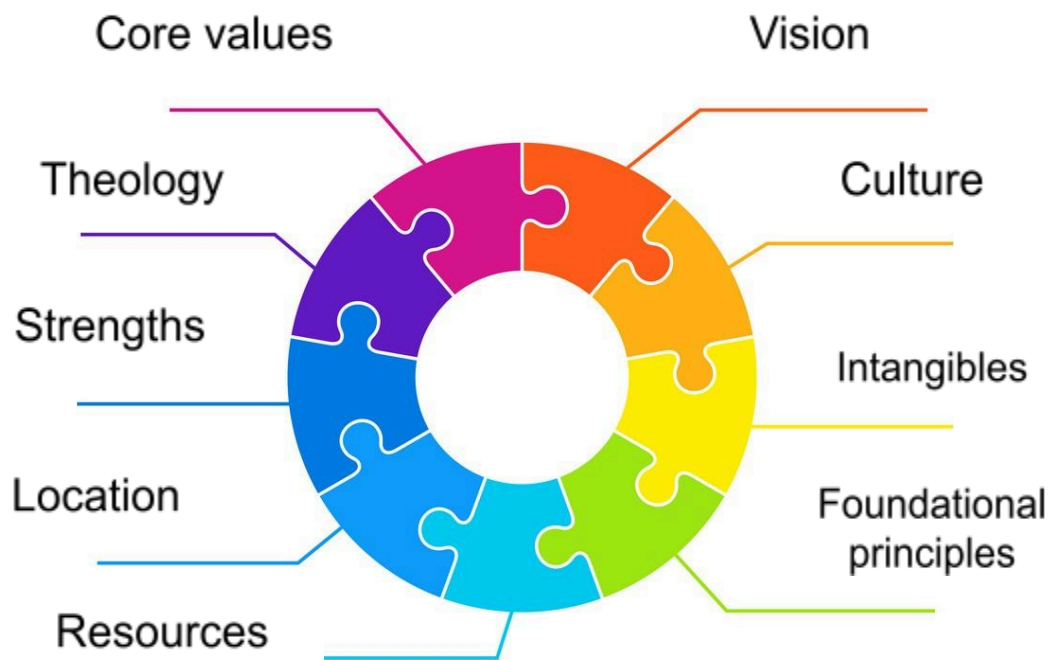
A common question asked by young Christians is, why are there so many different churches? Simply put, it's because their DNA is different. While we all follow Christ and adhere to God's Word, there are a myriad of smaller variables that make us different and unique from each other, things like theology, vision and purpose statements, denominational affiliation, language, physical location, cultural heritage, etc. Add to this long list the more intangible things, like a pioneering spirit or a church-planting mentality

and it's easy to see why 2 churches side-by-side on the same street can be so different.

This simple understanding is why it's so important for us as a congregation to understand what our unique spiritual DNA is. There are many good churches in the downtown core. There are even other good churches in Chinatown. But what makes us unique? What makes

the CGC English congregation different? How has God created us and why has he planted us at the corner of Dundas and Huron? Coming to a sharpened understanding our God-given uniqueness and embracing that uniqueness is key to fulfilling God's purpose¹. In seeking God's direction forward, we need to embrace our spiritual DNA.

Our Spiritual DNA



Over the past couple of months, the task of our congregational leadership (ECB) and the Pastoral Care Team (PCT) has been to reflect on this very question...what is our spiritual DNA? They've been looking through the church records, analyzing our core values, interviewing founding families, reviewing the City of Toronto vision for Chinatown, and then synthesizing all that information down so that we can have a simple defining statement that propels us forward to serve God. Our desire and plan is to have this synthesis and simple statement ready for our November Town Hall.

As we move forward in this process of seeing God's will for us, we are not limited by our identity, rather it becomes the unique fingerprint of grace as we serve and proclaim the Gospel. It is what strengthens us in our sense of purpose, identity and sharpens our efforts and effectiveness to glorify God.

¹ https://www.enlivenpublishing.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/12/Discover_The_DNA_and_Mission_Of_Your_Church.pdf

Over the coming weeks, we ask you to pray for the leadership as we seek God's understanding in these matters. If you have any insight that might help us, or if you're simply interested in knowing more about what they're doing, please don't hesitate to ask. We'd love to get your feedback.

Pastor Kevin

**In seeking God's direction forward, we
must embrace our spiritual DNA.**

May the Lord continue to strengthen and use you this week to bring glory to his name.